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OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES MESSIANICALLY APPLIED BY THE ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE.¹

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In theology the Christological system starts from the *πρῶτον εὐαγγέλιον*, in Gen. III., 15. Not so the ancient synagogue. Starting from the talmudic saying, that "all the prophets have prophesied only of the days of the Messiah," it found references to the Messiah in many more passages of the Old Testament than those verbal predictions to which we generally appeal. According to this maxim, almost every passage of the Old Testament is to be referred to Messiah. That this was believed in the time of Jesus we see from passages like John v., 46, "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me." Now, these words are so general, that they cannot very well be confined, as is usually done, to Gen. III., 15; XII., 3; XVIII., 18; XXII., 18; XLIX., 10; Deut. XVIII., 15, 18. The same apostle also says (ch. XIX., 36): "For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken." Almost the same idea, as expressed in the talmudic passage quoted above, we find in the words of Peter, when he says (Acts III., 24): "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Such being the ideas in the consciousness of the writers in the time of Jesus, it is of no small interest to examine the sources, such as the *Talmud*, both the Jerusalem and Babylonian, the *Targumim* or Chaldee Paraphrases, and the oldest *Midrashim*, whence we derive our information on the subject.

GENESIS.

I., 2. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

This is the Spirit of the King Messiah, as it is said, "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him" (Isa. XL., 2).—*Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 2, 8. Whence do you prove that Messiah already existed before the creation? From "And the Spirit of God," etc.; and that the Messiah is meant thereby is seen from Isa. XL., 2, "And the Spirit of the Lord," etc.—*Pesikta Rabbathi*, fol. 58, col. 2.

¹ Although Dr. Edersheim, in his *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (London, 1883), has treated the same subject, yet a comparison of both will show the truth of the old saying, "Duo, quum faciunt idem, non est idem." The reader will find it very difficult, if not impossible, to verify Edersheim's quotations; for to do this it requires not only a rabbinic library, but also a knowledge of rabbinic literature. As both these things cannot be expected of every one, it has been our aim to give the quotations in full. And this is one feature wherein our treatment of the subject differs from Edersheim. In Schaff-Herzog's *Encyclop.*, s. v. *Midrash*, the reader will find the necessary information concerning the midrashic literature; and s. v. *Targum*, all that refers to the Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament.

I., 4. "And God saw the light that it was good."

Which light is it that shineth to the congregation of God? The light of Messiah, as it is written, "And God saw the light that it was good;" that is to say, God saw beforehand, before the world was created, that the Messiah will bring salvation to the nations.—*Pesikta Rabbathi*, fol 62, col. 1. Referring to this exposition, the author of *Yalkut Shimeoni*, fol. 56, asks: What is indicated in the words (Ps. xxxvi., 10), "In thy light shall we see light?" what else than the light of the Messiah, of whom it is said, "And God saw the light that it was good."

III., 15. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The *Jerusalem Targum* thus paraphrases this passage: And it shall come to pass, when the children of the woman shall labor in the law, and perform the commandments, that they shall bruise and smite thee on thy head, and shall kill thee; but when the children of the woman shall forsake the precepts of the law, and shall not perform the commandments, thou shalt bruise and smite them on their heel, and hurt them; but there shall be a remedy for the children of the woman, but for thee, O serpent, there shall be no remedy, for hereafter they shall to each other perform a healing in the heel in the latter end of the days, in the days of King Messiah. The *Targum of Jonathan* goes on in the same strain, and concludes: Nevertheless there shall be a remedy for them; but to thee there shall not be a remedy; for they shall hereafter perform a healing in the heel in the days of King Messiah. The *Talmud Sota*, fol. 49, col. 2, speaks of "the heels of the Messiah" (עקבות משיח), i. e., of the time when the heel of the Messiah shall be bruised by the serpent, with reference to the troubles in the Messianic time. As this passage is very interesting, we give it here in full: Rabbi Pinchas, the son of Yair, said, Since the destruction of the Temple, the sages and the nobles are ashamed, and cover their heads. The wonder-workers are disdained, and those who rely upon their arm and tongue have become great. There is none who teaches (Israel), none who prays for the people, none who inquires (of the Lord). Upon whom, then, are we to trust? Upon our Father who is in heaven. Rabbi Eliezer the Great said: Since the destruction of the Temple, the sages have commenced to be like school-masters, and the school-masters like precentors, and the precentors like the laymen, and these too grow worse, and there is none who asks or inquires. Upon whom, then, are we to trust? Upon our Father who is in heaven. In the footprints of the Messiah impudence will increase, and there will be scarcity. The vine will produce its fruit, but wine will be dear. The government will turn itself to heresy, and there will be no reproof. And the house of assembly will be for fornication. Galilee will be destroyed, and Gablan laid waste, and men of Gebul will

go from city to city, and find no favor. And the wisdom of the scribes will stink, and those who fear sin will be despised, and truth will fail. Boys will confuse the faces of old men. Old men will rise up before the young. The son will treat the father shamefully, and the daughter will rise up against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes will be those of his own household. The face of that generation will be as the face of a dog; the son will have no shame before his father. Upon whom, then, are we to trust? Upon our Father who is in heaven.—*Sota*, fol. 49, col. a, b.

IV., 25. "For God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew."

Rabbi Tanchuma said in the name of Rabbi Samuel, Eva meant that seed which comes from another place. And who is meant? The King Messiah.—*Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 23. Rav Huna said, It is written, "For God hath appointed another seed;" this is the seed which comes from another place. Who is that? The King Messiah.—*Ruth Rabba*, sec. 8.

XIX., 32. "Come, let us make our father drink wine, that we may preserve seed of our father."

Rabbi Tanchuma said in the name of Rabbi Samuel: The daughters said, "that we may preserve seed of our father." It is not written "a son," but "seed," which is to indicate the seed which is to come from another place. And what seed is it? The King Messiah.—*Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 41.

XXII., 18. "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Why does God compare the Israelites to the sand of the sea? Because without sand no plant can be planted, and thus no one could exist; because there would be no fruits. Thus, likewise, the world could not exist without the Israelites; wherefore it is also written, "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." In this life, it is true, the Israelites are compared to the dust of the earth, but in the Messianic age they will be like the sand of the sea; for as the sand makes the teeth dull, so also will the heathen be destroyed in the time of the Messiah, as it is said: "Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Num. xxiv., 19).—*Bemidbar Rabba*, sec. 2.

XXXV., 21. "And spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar."

The *Targum Jonathan*, in loco, And Jacob journeyed and extended his tabernacle beyond the tower of Edar, the place whence hereafter King Messiah shall be revealed in the end of days.

XLIX., 10. "Until Shiloh come."

The *Targum Onkelos* paraphrases, Until that Messiah shall come, whose is the kingdom. The *Jerusalem Targum*, Until the time that King Messiah shall come, whose is the kingdom. The *Targum Jonathan*, Until the time that

King Messiah, the youngest of his children, shall come. The *Midrash Bereshith Rabba* (sec. 98, 99), *Midrash Echa* (i. e., on Lamentations i., 16) refer the expression "Shiloh" to the Messiah. That "Shiloh" was regarded as the name of the Messiah, we see from the following interesting talmudic passage: What is his name? They of the school of Rav Shila said, His name is Shiloh, as it is said, "Until Shiloh come." But those of the school of Rabbi Yanai said, His name is Yinon, as it is said, "Before the sun (was) his name was Yinon" (Ps. LXXII., 17). They of the school of Hanina said, Hanina is his name, as it is said, "Where I will not show you favor" (Jer. XVI., 13). And some say, His name is Menachem, the son of Hezekiah, as it is said, "Because he keeps far from me the Comforter, who refreshes my soul" (Lam. i., 16). The rabbis say, His name is the leper of the house of Rabbi, as it is said, "Surely he hath borne our sickness, and endured the burden of our pains, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isa. LIII., 4).—*Sanhedrin*, fol. 98, col. 2.¹

— "And unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

The same is meant to whom the prophecy refers, "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people" (Isa. XI., 10).—*Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 99.

XLIX., 11. "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes." The *Jerusalem Targum*: How fair is King Messiah, who is hereafter to arise from the house of Judah! He girdeth up his loins, and goes forth to battle against his foes, smiting kings with (their) princes, reddening their rivers with the blood of their slain, and whitening his valleys with the fatness of their strength; his garments are dipped in blood; he is like to the treader of grapes. The *Targum Jonathan* speaks almost in the same words. *Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 99, remarks on the words "and his ass's colt unto the choice vine," This refers to him of whom it is said "lowly, and riding upon an ass" (Zech. IX., 9). In the Talmud we read, Whoever sees a vine in his dream, will see the Messiah, because it is written, "and his ass's colt unto the choice vine."—*Berachoth*, fol. 57, col. 1.

XLIX., 12. "His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk."

The *Jerusalem Targum*: How fair are the eyes of King Messiah to look upon! more beautiful than the vine, purer than to behold with them the uncovering of nakedness, and the shedding of innocent blood; his teeth are more skillful in the law than to eat with them deeds of violence and rapine. The *Targum Jonathan* uses almost the same words.

¹ The same we find in *Midrash Echa*, or *Lamentations*, on i., 16.

EXODUS.

- XII., 42. "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of al¹ the children of Israel in their generations."

The *Jerusalem Targum* paraphrases: It is a night to be kept and established for the deliverance which is from before the Lord in the bringing out of the children of Israel free from the land of Egypt. For there are four nights written in the book of remembrance. The first night was when the word of the Lord was revealed on the world to create it.... The second night was when the word of the Lord was revealed to Abraham between the parts.... The third night was when the word of the Lord appeared against the Egyptians at midnight.... The fourth night shall be when the world shall arrive at its end to be dissolved, the cords of the wicked shall be consumed, and the iron yoke shall be broken, Moses shall go forth from the midst of the desert, and King Messiah from the midst of Rome, etc.

- XVI., 25. "Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord."
Jerusalem Talmud: Rabbi Levi said, If Israel would only observe one sabbath as it ought to be observed, the son of David would soon come, as it is said, "Moses said," etc.—*Taanith*, fol. 64, col. 1.¹

- XL., 9. "And shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof, and it shall be holy."
 The *Targum Jonathan*: And thou shalt hallow the magnificent crown of the kingdom of the house of Judah and the King Messiah, who will redeem Israel in the latter days."

- XL., 11. "And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it."
 The *Targum Jonathan*: And thou shalt anoint the laver, etc., for the sake of ... Messiah, the son of Ephraim, who is to proceed from him; by whom Israel will subdue Gog and his allies in the latter days.

LEVITICUS.

- XXVI., 12. "And I will walk among you."
 This refers to the Messianic time, as it is said, "For they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion" (Isa. LII., 8).—*Pesikta Sotarta*, fol. 34, col. 1.

NUMBERS.

- XI., 26. "And they prophesied in the camp."
 The *Jerusalem Targum*: And both of them prophesied together, and they said, In the end of the heel of days, Gog and Magog and their army shall ascend against Jerusalem, but by the hand of King Messiah they shall fall.

¹ In the Babylonian Talmud, *Shabbath*, fol. 118, col. 2, we read: If Israel would only observe two sabbaths as they ought to, they would soon be redeemed.

XXIII., 21. "And the shout of a king is among them."

The *Targum Jonathan*: And the shouting of King Messiah which he will shout among them.

XXIV., 7. "And his kingdom shall be exalted."

The *Jerusalem Targum*: And the kingdom of King Messiah will be magnified.

XXIV., 17. "There shall come a star of Jacob."

The *Targum Onkelos*: When a mighty king of Jacob's house will reign, and the Messiah will be magnified. The *Targum Jonathan*: When there shall reign a strong king of the house of Jacob, and Messiah shall be anointed, and a strong sceptre shall be from Israel, etc. Rabbi Simeon the son of Yochaï lectured: Rabbi Akiba, my teacher, explained, "There shall come a star of Jacob;" Cosiba comes of Jacob, for when he saw Bar Cosiba, he exclaimed, This is the King Messiah.—*Jerusalem Taanith*, fol. 68, col. 4. The Israelites said to God, How long shall we be in bondage? He replied, Till the day comes of which it is said, "There shall come a star of Jacob."—*Debarim Rabba*, sec. 1. Our rabbis have a tradition that in the week in which Messiah will be born, there will be a bright star in the east, which is the star of the Messiah.—*Pesikta Sotarta*, fol. 58, col. 1.

XXIV., 20. "But his latter end shall be that he perish for ever."

Targum Jonathan: And their end in the days of King Messiah."

XXIV., 24. "And ships shall come from the coast of Chittim," etc.

Targum Jonathan: The destiny of all of them is to be conquered by King Messiah.

DEUTERONOMY.

XXV., 19. "Thou shalt not forget it."

Targum Jonathan: And even to the days of King Messiah thou shalt not forget it.

XXX., 4. "And from thence will he fetch thee."

Targum Jonathan: From thence will the word of the Lord your God gather you by the hand of Elijah the high-priest, and from thence will he bring you by the hand of King Messiah.

XXXII., 7. "Remember the days of old," etc.

Another explanation is this: "Remember the days of old" means that whenever God brings sufferings upon you, remember how many good and comfortable things he is about to give you in the world to come. "Consider the years of many generations" denotes the generation of the Messiah.—*Siphre* (ed. Friedmann), p. 134, col. 1.

XXXIII., 12. "And he shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

"And he shall cover him" denotes the first temple; "all the day long" denotes the second temple; "and he shall dwell between his shoulders" denotes

the days of the Messiah. Rabbi said, "and he shall cover him" denotes this world; "all the day long" this are the days of the Messiah; "and he shall dwell between his shoulders" means the world to come.—*Talm. Bab. Zevachim*, fol. 118, col. 2.

XXXIII., 17. "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock."

This passage is quoted in connection with Gen. XXXII., 5, "And I have oxen and asses." According to the rabbis, ox denoted the anointed of the war, for it is said, "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock;" ass denotes the King Messiah, for it is said, "Lowly, and riding-upon an ass" (Zech. IX., 9). *Bereshith Rabba*, sec. 95.

RUTH.

I., 1. "Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land."

Targum: And it came to pass. . . a mighty famine in the land of Israel. Ten mighty famines were decreed from the heavens to be in the world from the day that the world was created until King Messiah should come.

II., 14. "And Boaz said unto her, at meal-time come thou hither," etc.

The Midrash *in loco* remarks that Rabbi Jochanan interpreted this in six different ways. He referred it to David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Manasseh, King Messiah and Boaz. As to the fifth we read: The words refer to the history of King Messiah. "Come thou hither" means draw near to the kingdom; "and eat of the bread," i. e., eat of the bread of the kingdom; "and dip thy morsel in the vinegar," i. e., these are the sufferings, as it is said, "He was wounded for our transgressions" (Isa. LIII., 5); "and she sat beside the reapers" because his kingdom will once be put aside for a short time, for it is said, "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken" (Zech. XIV., 2). "And he reached her parched corn," i. e., the kingdom will again be given to him, as it is said, "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth" (Isa. XI., 4). Rabbi Berachia said in the name of Rabbi Levi: "As the first redeemer, so the last; as the first redeemer (i. e., Moses) revealed himself and disappeared from before them (i. e., the Israelites)—and how long was he hidden from them? Three months, as it is said, "And they met Moses and Aaron" (Exod. v., 20)—so also will the last redeemer appear to them and disappear from before them. And for how long? Rabbi Tanchuma said in the name of the rabbis, Forty-five days, and this it is what is said: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away" and "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh" (Dan. XII., 11, 12). And what kind of days are these? Rabbi Isaac, the son of Kezarthia, said in the name of Rabbi Jonah: During these forty-five days the Israelites cut up mallows and eat them, and to this refers "Who cut up

mallows by the bushes" (Job xxx., 4). Whither does he (the redeemer) lead them (the Israelites, before he disappears)? From the land into the wilderness of Judea, as it is said, "Behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness" (Hos. ii., 14). Some say, "into the wilderness of Sihon and Og," for it is said, "yet make thee dwell in tabernacles as in the days of the solemn feast" (xii., 9). Whosoever believes in him, shall live; whosoever believes not in him, goes to the nations of the world, which kill him. At the end God reveals himself to them, and sends down manna. "There is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. i., 9).—*Ruth Rabba*, sec. 5.

III., 15. "He measured six measures of barley."

Targum: And he measured six measures of barley and immediately it was said by prophecy that hereafter there should proceed from her the six righteous ones of the world, who should each of them hereafter be blessed with six blessings,—David, and Daniel, and his (three) companions, and King Messiah.

IV., 18. "Now these are the generations of Pharez."

You find that the word תולדות (i. e., generations) is everywhere in Scripture written defective (i. e., without the *waw* ך), except in two passages, viz., "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth" (Gen. ii., 4), and "These are the generations of Pharez." And there is a great reason for this. Why? It is said, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth," where the word תולדות is written *plene*. Why? Because when God created his world, there was not yet the angel of death in the world, and therefore the word is written *plene*. But when Adam and Eva sinned, all the תולדות (generations) in the Scripture became *defective*; when Pharez arose, his תולדות became again *plene*, because from him proceeds Messiah, and in his time God swallows up death, as it is said, "He will swallow up death in victory" (Isa. xxv., 8). Therefore in these two passages (Gen. ii., 4; Ruth iv., 18) the word תולדות is written *plene*.—*Midrash on Exodus*, or *Shemoth Rabba*, sec. 30.

IV., 20. See Gen. iv., 25.

1 SAMUEL.

II., 10. "And exalt the horn of his anointed."

Targum: And will magnify the kingdom of his Messiah.

2 SAMUEL.

XXII., 28. "And the afflicted people thou wilt save."

This passage is brought in connection with the advent of the Messiah in the *Talmud Sanhedrin*, fol. 98, col. 1: Rabbi Yochanan said, If thou seest a generation whose prosperity is gradually diminishing, look out for Him, for it is said, "And the afflicted people thou wilt save."

XXIII., 1. "Now these be the last words of David."

Targum: Now these are the words of prophecy of David, which he prophesied concerning the end of the world, concerning the days of consolation, which are hereafter to come.

XXIII., 3. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

Targum: He promised to set up from me a king, who is the Messiah, that shall rise and reign in the fear of the Lord.

1 KINGS.

IV., 33. "And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree, etc."

Targum: And he prophesied concerning the kings of the house of David, who were hereafter to reign in this world, and in the world to come of Messiah, and he prophesied concerning the cattle, etc.